

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 097485

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 EA-06 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-03 SCA-01

AID-05 OPR-02 L-02 H-02 DPW-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

DODE-00 /074 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W:RMWALTER:BJR

APPROVED BY AF:EMULCAHY

EA:RMILLER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LOME IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY

USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

GOVGUAM PRIORITY

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 097485

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR, SREF, UNHCR, VS, TO

SUBJ: PRESIDENT EYADEMA'S OFFER OF ASYLUM TO VIETNAMESE

- FAMILY

REF: (A) LOME 876 (B) STATE 95574

1. APRIL 26 WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE CONTAINED REPORT ON
CURRENT SAIGON AIR TRANSPORT SITUATION. TEXT FOLLOWS.
QUOTE: AS THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES CROWDING THE SAIGON
AIRPORT AREA GREW, THE NUMBER OF U.S. AIR FORCE PLANES
RUNNING THE SHUTTLE BETWEEN SAIGON AND GUAM DROPPED FROM
28 THURSDAY TO 22 FRIDAY.

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PAGE 02 STATE 097485

AMERICAN COMMERCIAL AIRLINES WERE ORDERED BY THE U.S.

GOVERNMENT TO CEASE OPERATIONS IN VIETNAM FOR SAFETY REASONS. THE HONG KONG-BASED CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS, THAI INTERNATIONAL AND THE FRENCH AIRLINE UTA ALSO HAVE STOPPED FLYING INTO SAIGON. ONLY SINGAPORE AIRLINES, AIR VIETNAM AND AIR FRANCE STILL ARE OPERATING FLIGHTS.

IN AN ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME THE SHORTAGE OF PLANES--CAUSED MAINLY BECAUSE IT IS AT LEAST TWICE THE FLYING TIME TO GUAM THAN TO THE ORIGINAL DESTINATION OF REFUGEE AIRLIFTS OF CLARK AIRBASE IN THE PHILIPPINES--MORE THAN 200 PERSONS

ARE BEING CARRIED ABOARD EACH C-141 STARLIFTER JET AND C-130 TURBO-PROP BEING USED IN THE EVACUATION. THE REFUGEES ARE BEING STRAPPED TO THE FLOORS OF THE PLANES.

THE UNITED STATES ASKED THE PHILIPPINES TO LIFT ITS RESTRICTIONS ON REFUGEES PASSING THROUGH AMERICAN BASES SO THE FLYING TIME OF REFUGEE PLANES COULD BE CUT IN HALF. THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT FERDINAND E. MARCOS IS ALLOWING ONLY 200 VIETNAMESE EVACUATES (SIC) TO BE ON U.S. BASES AT ANY ONE TIME. END QUOTE.

2. SUGGESTION MADE PARA 3 REF B THAT EYADEMA MAY WISH TO CONSIDER COMMERCIAL CHARTER TO EVACUATE DUONG FAMILY WOULD APPEAR MORE EXPEDITIOUS SOLUTION IN VIEW OF SITUATION DESCRIBED IN POST ARTICLE. KISSINGER

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